Kenneth Gentry on Luke 21:22 – His Desperation – DonKPreston.com

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KENNETH GENTRY ON LUKE 21:22 – HIS DESPERATION

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I have written numerous articles interacting with Kenneth Gentry, an outspoken critic of Covenant Eschatology. He is also one of the most ardent advocates of postmillennialism. In my work on 1 Thessalonians 4:13f entitled We Shall Meet Him In the Air, The Wedding of the King of Kings, I do an in-depth analysis of Gentry's hermeneutic. It appears to me personally that as time goes on, Gentry becomes more illogical and desperate in his attempts to respond to Covenant Eschatology. His argument addressed in this article is a prime example of that. Dr. Gentry takes every opportunity to condemn preterists, but he refuses to actually engage in honorable discussions with preterists. Dr. Gentry has been challenged many times by numerous people, including myself, to meet me in formal public debate. It seems Dr. Gentry is always "too busy." Anyone wishing to forward this article, with my invitation to formal debate, to Gentry, is more than welcome to do so. I have little hope that he will respond. Every time I have personally emailed him, even though he has opened the posts, he has not even given me the courtesy of a response, or, he has told me he is too busy. We can only hope that this will change.

A brother Ray West, forwarded to me a post by Gentry in which he once again takes a shot at preterists. The comments are from his own blog and review of his revised book *He Shall Have Dominion, available on Amazon.* Gentry clearly thinks that he has found a fatal flaw in the preterist argument on Luke 21:22. Here is Mr. Gentry's argument:

"In its context Luke 21:22

"But when you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then recognize that her desolation is at hand. Then let those who are in Judea flee to the mountains, and let those who are in the midst of the city depart, and let not those who are in the

country enter the city; because these are days of vengeance, in order that all things which are written may be fulfilled" (Lk 21:20-22)

Inarguably, (sic) the context here is focusing on AD 70, as even Dispensationalists agree.

The hyper-preterists naively assume that Jesus is speaking globally of absolutely all prophecies when he declares that "all things which are written" will be fulfilled in AD 70. They hold, therefore, that no prophecy remains, which means that prophecies regarding the resurrection of all men, the second coming, and more came to pass in AD 70. They base their argument on deficient hermeneutics. Note just one deadly observation against their approach: The grammar of the passage limits the declaration. Jesus speaks of "all things which are written" by employing a perfect passive participle: /gegrammena /("having been written"). This refers to prophecies already written — when he speaks in AD 30. Yet we know that more prophecies arise later in the New Testament revelation.

Once again we see a limitation on Jesus' statement. Furthermore, technically it does not even refer to any prophecy which Christ speaks. For these are not prophecies that have already been written. That being the case, the final resurrection (for instance) is outside of this declaration (Jn 5:28-29) http://net.bible.org/verse.php?book=joh&chapter=5&verse=28>–29).

Thus, Jesus is referring to all things written in the Old Testament. At this stage of redemptive history those are the only prophecies that had already been written. (end quote, DKP).

Quite frankly, I could hardly believe what I was reading from the erudite Dr. Gentry! He has engaged in numerous debates, and surely knows that one must be careful in making polemic arguments. The absolute desperation, the total failure of logic on the part of Dr. Gentry is glaring and egregious.

Let me summarize Dr. **Kenneth Gentry's** argument for ease of understanding.

When Jesus said (Luke 21:22), that "all things written must be fulfilled," he referred only to those prophecies (and all of those prophecies), that had been written prior to his statement in A.D. 30.

All New Testament prophecies of the resurrection (e.g. John 5:28f, 1 Corinthians 15, 1 Thessalonians, etc.), were written after A.D. 30.

Therefore, all New Testament prophecies of the resurrection were not part of the "all things that are written" that were to be fulfilled in the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Here is what Dr. Gentry concludes: "Thus, Jesus is referring to all things written in the Old Testament. At this stage of redemptive history those are the only prophecies that had already been written."

Gentry's "logic," if such it can be called, fails on a number of points. However, I am going to keep this article to the barest minimum.

I will only make two points in response to Dr. Gentry's amazing argument.

Argument #1– The New Testament prophecies of the resurrection are simply the reiteration of the Old Testament prophecies (things already written in A.D. 30).
Proof of this argument: I need only refer to the words of Paul. The apostle affirmed in the most unambiguous manner that his doctrine of the resurrection was nothing but that found in the Old Testament, i.e. in that which had already been written!
Acts 24:14-15: "But this I confess to you, that according to the Way which they call a sect, so I worship the God of my fathers, believing all things which are written in the Law and in the Prophets. I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust."
Paul said his doctrine of the resurrection of the dead, for which he was on trial, was found in Moses and the Law and the prophets. That certainly qualifies as that which was written before A.D. 30.

Acts 26:21-23– "Having therefore obtained help of God, I continue unto this day, witnessing both to small and great, saying none other things than those which the prophets and Moses did say should come: That Christ should suffer, and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead, and should shew light unto the people, and to the Gentiles."
Paul said he preached nothing, nothing but the hope of Israel found in Moses and the prophets. Do you catch the power of that?

Paul taught of the resurrection of the dead.

But, Paul did not preach anything but the hope of Israel found in Moses and the prophets.

Therefore, the doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was found in Moses

and the prophets.

Romans 8:23– 9:1-4– “And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body… For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: 4 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises.”

The adoption, according to Paul, was the resurrection.

But, the promise of the adoption was given to, and belonged to, Israel after the flesh.

This means that the adoption, the promise of the resurrection, was from the Old Testament prophecies.

1 Corinthians 15:54-55– “So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?”

Paul cites Isaiah 25:8 and Hosea 13:14 as the source of his resurrection doctrine in Corinthians.

Paul said that the resurrection would be when Isaiah 25 and Hosea 13:14 would be fulfilled.

Thus, the resurrection hope and doctrine of 1 Corinthians 15 was found in, and based on the Old Testament prophecies made to Israel.

From these texts, it is undeniable that the resurrection hope expressed by the New Testament writers was nothing other than a reiteration of what had already been written long ago in the Old Testament scriptures! This is fatal to Gentry’s argument and theology.
You simply cannot say that the New Testament prophecies of the resurrection are not grounded in and based on the Old Covenant prophecies. This is to deny Paul who said he preached nothing but the hope of Israel found in Moses and the prophets. 1 Corinthians 15 is not different from Isaiah 25 or Hosea 13:14, for Paul says that when the resurrection occurred, it would be the fulfillment of those prophecies. To say that 1 Corinthians 15 is the explication of those prophecies is

not the same as saying that they are different from those prophecies.
You cannot say that all Old Testament prophecies were fulfilled at the A.D. 70 parousia of Christ, therefore, without affirming the fulfillment of all New Testament eschatology. There is no "new" eschatology in the New Testament. All New Testament eschatology is the anticipation of the imminent fulfillment of Old Testament promises. Period. This totally falsifies Gentry's specious argument.
What is astounding to consider in light of Gentry's argument above is that **Kenneth Gentry** believes that the Old Testament did indeed predict the resurrection of the dead at the end of the Christian age! In his book, *The Greatness of the Great Commission,* (Tyler, Tx., Institute for Christian Economics, 1993)142, Gentry cites Daniel 12:2 as predictive of the resurrection "at the end of history." So, consider what this does for Dr. Gentry:

All Old Testament prophecy would be fulfilled by the time of, and in the events of the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. (Kenneth Gentry)

But, the Old Testament predicted the general resurrection of the dead (Daniel 12:2, Kenneth Gentry)

Therefore, the general resurrection of the dead occurred in the events of the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

We have established point #1 beyond any possibility of refutation. This point alone totally destroys Gentry's attempt at refuting Covenant Eschatology.

Argument #2– For argument sake therefore, I will most gladly accept Dr. Gentry's own summary statement: "Thus, Jesus is referring to all things written in the Old Testament. At this stage of redemptive history those are the only prophecies that had already been written." (My emphasis, DKP)
Consider then the following argument:

All things written in the Old Testament, i.e. all Old Testament prophecy, was fulfilled by the time of, and in the events of, the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. (Kenneth Gentry).

But, the Old Testament prophesied of the resurrection of the dead (Acts 24:14f; 26:6f; 26:21f, Romans 8:23-9:1-4, 1 Corinthians 15:55-56).

Therefore, the prophecies of the resurrection of the dead were fulfilled by the time of, and in the events of, the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

This argument is prima facie true.
It is incontrovertibly true that the Old Testament foretold the resurrection of the dead. Kenneth Gentry agrees.
It is irrefutably true that all New Testament prophecies of the resurrection are drawn from and the reiteration of the Old Testament prophecies.
It is undeniable that Jesus said that all things written would be fulfilled by the time of, and in the events of the fall of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.
Kenneth Gentry is correct in affirming that all Old Testament prophecies would be fulfilled at / in A.D. 70. And this proves, beyond refutation, that the resurrection of the dead came at the dissolution of the Old Covenant age of Israel in A.D. 70. Incidentally, it would do no good for Mr. Gentry, or anyone else, to amend his statement and argue that all that Jesus really meant was that all Old Covenant prophecies concerning the fall of Jerusalem were to be fulfilled in A.D. 70. (You will note that Gentry made no attempt to limit the scope of the Old Covenant prophecies to be fulfilled in A.D. 70. He said emphatically, "Jesus is referring to all things written in the Old Testament").
The indisputable fact is that in the Old Testament the resurrection of the dead is repeatedly posited at the destruction of Old Covenant Israel. Note a couple of examples.

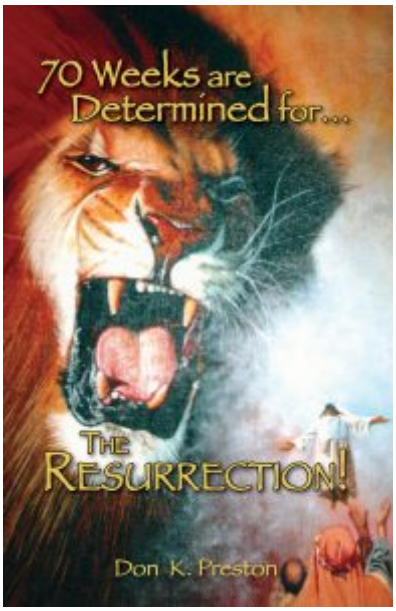
Isaiah 25:1-8– "O LORD, You are my God. I will exalt You, I will praise Your name, For You have done wonderful things; Your counsels of old are faithfulness and truth. For you have made a city a ruin, A fortified city a ruin, A palace of foreigners to be a city no more; It will never be rebuilt. Therefore the strong people will glorify You; The city of the terrible nations will fear You. For You have been a strength to the poor, A strength to the needy in his distress, A refuge from the storm, A shade from the heat; For the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. You will reduce the noise of aliens, As heat in a dry place; As heat in the shadow of a cloud, The song of the terrible ones will be diminished. And in this mountain The LORD of hosts will make for all people A feast of choice pieces, A feast of wines on the lees, Of fat things full of marrow, Of well–refined wines on the lees. And He will destroy on this mountain The surface of the covering cast over all people, And the veil that is spread over all nations. 8 He will swallow up death forever, And the Lord GOD will wipe away tears from all faces; The rebuke of His people He will take away from all the earth; For the LORD has spoken."

Note that in the day that YHVH would destroy death, it would also be when He made the city a desolation, and turned the temple over to foreigners! The city under consideration is the "city of confusion" in chapter 24:10f, Ariel, i.e.

Jerusalem. So, Isaiah emphatically posits the resurrection at the time of Jerusalem's demise.

In chapter 26:19-21, the Lord predicted the resurrection at the time when YHVH would come out of heaven and avenge the blood of the martyrs. Of course, Jesus was emphatically clear that all of the righteous blood of all the saints, shed on the earth, would be avenged in the judgment of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 (Matthew 23:34f). In Isaiah 27:1f, we find the destruction of Leviathan, the enemy of God, defeated in the day that the Lord would come, the Day of 26:19f, i.e. the day of the resurrection. And, this Day of the Lord would also be when the people that YHVH had created would no longer receive mercy, and He would turn the altar to chalkstones (Isaiah 27:9f). Thus, again, the resurrection is clearly placed in the context of the judgment of Jerusalem and Israel.

Likewise, the very passage that Gentry appeals to for the resurrection at the end of the age, Daniel 12:2, says that the resurrection would be, "when the power of the holy people is completely shattered" (Daniel 12:2-7). It is to be noted that Gentry now agrees that Daniel 12:2 foretold the spiritual resurrection of Israel in AD 70!). See my book, Seventy Weeks Are Determined…For the Resurrection, for full documentation of this fact.



This book proves that the resurrection was in AD 70!

There are in fact several O.T. passages that posit the resurrection in the context of the judgment of Israel.

The point of course is that it will do Gentry no good whatsoever to now say that all that Jesus really meant to say was "these be the days of vengeance in which all things that are written about the fall of Jerusalem will be fulfilled." On one level, we could agree with this, for as it has been demonstrated, the fall of Jerusalem was

in fact to be the time of the resurrection!

So, Kenneth Gentry boasts that the “hyper-preterists” make a “naive” claim about Luke 21:22. He says we are guilty of “deficient hermeneutics.” He claims to have made a “deadly observation” against the preterist argument. In fact, Gentry has exposed his own desperation and his own naive and deficient hermeneutic. We have made what is in fact “a deadly observation” in response to Gentry’s specious argument.

Kenneth Gentry has, through his own argument, destroyed his Postmillennial, futurist eschatology. He has actually confirmed the truthfulness of “hyper-preterism!” Perhaps there is no need for Mr. Gentry to publicly debate Covenant Eschatology after all (although my invitation remains valid), for the more he writes, the more he confirms that Christ’s “Second Coming” and the prophecies of the resurrection were fulfilled in A.D. 70. (I suspect that in a fourth revision of Dr. Gentry’s book, he will modify or delete his comments on Luke 21:22. It will be interesting to see, will it not?)

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